

THE BELL RINGER



Montgomery Bell Academy

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Weaknesses Creep into Totomoi System

By John Eason (Co-Editor-in-Chief)

"What do you think this article is going to do?" numerous seniors have asked upon hearing that I was going to question the current Totomoi system and wonder why more senior members were not tapped. It was a valid point for me to think about before I dove into the Totomoi issue. For one, this society is very secretive and confidential about the way in which it works. Finding any information about the society and its voting system is rather difficult as students are told not to tell of what goes on in the meetings. MBA is also a private school and the combination of this with the secrecy of Totomoi puts the society on level that my words might not be able to reach. This article may do little to reform the Totomoi, but I hope it will at least inform our student body of some of its weaknesses and the poor treatment given to this year's senior applicants.

Let me first say that in no way am I looking to question the legitimacy of any Totomoi members. Every single member is well deserving of his award and should be proud to have the society's key. This article

is also not my whining about rejection, because I didn't even apply. What I am going to point out is that by looking at the numbers over the past five years, it seems this year's senior class were treated poorly. Typically, about 10% of the senior class gets tapped into the society. Now Totomoi members keep telling me that the 10% number is only an outer boundary line, but that actually it can be between 5% and 10%. I find this very hard to believe by looking at the past four years. In 1999, 10 people were selected and there were 104 in the class. In 2000, 9 people were selected and 91 were in the class. In 2001, 10 people were selected and 108 were in the class. In 2002, 10 people were selected and 104 were in the class. Yet now in 2003, only 8 people were selected in a class of 112. For the past four years, 10% of the class was tapped and yet for some reason only 7% of this year's class was tapped. It seems three spots were left open. There could be justification for this lack of membership. Maybe our class is not as good as the classes of the past. Maybe there actually were not any other legitimate

members in our class. Unfortunately this is not the case. The problem was a lack of information flow for the senior applications.

In the Totomoi selection meeting, no senior applications were given out for review, only junior applications. No, that's not a misprint. No senior applications were seen. Call me crazy, but that just seems wrong. How are the students, and especially the faculty, supposed to know what these senior applicants did if their information was not given out. When I asked one faculty member of Totomoi exactly why Matt Conrad was left out, he said, "What has Conrad really done?" What has he really done? You must mean besides being Co-Editor of the *Archives*, Cum Laude Society member, Vice President of the Honor Council, Co-President of the Service Club, Ultimate Frisbee Captain, a four year soccer player, a three year cross country runner, a member of Mock Trial for 3 years, a writer for the *Bell Ringer*, a participant in school plays, and a participant in an exchange program in France. How could someone like this be left out of Totomoi? Lack of

information. If the senior applications were not reviewed, then how could all this information be known? How can anybody be expected to remember all those things that Matt Conrad has done? They cannot, and for this reason, it is an absolute necessity for all applications to be reviewed by those voting for Totomoi. Sadly, this lack of information for senior applicants might explain the low number of seniors voted on this year. Only 7% of our students got in. Other spots were left open.

What about Paul Reynolds? Paul is the Honor Council President this year and has been on the Honor Council since 8th

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Pestle Sizzles With Great Set and Acting

By Josh Mayhew (Entertainment Editor)

As the warm lights faded away and receded into a dim nothingness, the floating chatter of the theater conversation was on how incredible the set was. The straw thatching, intricate carving, and structural immensity raised eyebrows and harbored whispers on opening night of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. By the show's end, however, the audience would be chattering about something different – the undeniable success of the show. After combing my mind for a word to describe this play, "enchanted" seemed to illustrate it best.

Malcolm Morrison directed this romp, detailing Elizabethan society to the nines. Through continuous rehearsals, he was obviously able to explain to his cast exactly what was most important to portray – because it worked. The audience got a great feel for what the time period was like and the accents, set, and costumes mirrored this period beautifully.

His casting, for the most part, was very well-thought and selected. The talented cast wove together a quilt of brassy

personality that gave the show a life of its own from start to finish. Richard Howell and Katie Tompkins were the brazen backbone of the play. Both must be commended for staying completely in character with cockney accents for three hours. Their brilliant methods of interacting with the audience were a great mix of improvisational skills and well-thought direction.

The main plot of the story centered on Luce, Jasper, and Humphrey. Wesley Hughes, who played Luce, proved her true depth as an actress as she switched from smoldering and seductive to vulnerable and empathetic. Timothy Vaughn's flamboyantly anguished portrayal of Master Humphrey was played with perfect character perception – delightfully funny in every scene. The story also intertwines the wealthy Merrythought family. Rob DeLaney, playing the drunken Merrythought, once again proved his versatility as an actor. Chanting songs, stumbling through the audience, and delivering greasy monologues made his

performance both zany and fun to watch. Ben Pote, as always, turned in another great job as the Knight of the Burning Pestle himself. His melodramatic death scene capitalized the delicious absurdity of the play's writer, Francis Beaumont. Sara Luton, always a wonderful presence and talent, hosted a variety of smaller roles ranging from the show's prologue to the Queen of Moldavia. Other notable performances included the likes of Ben Newman, Elizabeth Warner, Paul Reynolds, Doug Altenbern, Jordan Jenkins, David Syverud, Matthew Behar, and Michael DeBruyn... among others.

Although the audience sometimes lost some of the words through thick accents, it was mostly understandable for all who wanted to understand, and who came to support the show. Above everything, this play truly reflected the prominent themes of the story, the hard work of the cast and crew, and the vast array of talent from MBA, Harpeth Hall, and St. Cecilia.

Anyone interested in being a piece of this year's theater showcase has one last opportunity available to them. Auditions for the student directed One Act plays are shortly after the return from Spring Break – all are welcome to audition.

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War for Wrong Reasons

By Chris Smith

While Americans anxiously wonder if the United States will wage war against Saddam Hussein's regime, an atmosphere of war's inevitability saturates nearly every community worldwide. Protesters gather in various nations to voice their dissent and duct tape flies off of the shelves of hardware stores across America. Adding to this heightened sense of war's imminence, Bush claims that a "coalition of the willing" can serve as a substitute for the United Nations if the U.N. does not approve a resolution allowing military force in Iraq. I have always opposed allowing the Cheney-Bush junta to make Iraq the 51st state and I think that because of the perceived inevitability of war my arguments deserve reiteration below.

If we must wage, as Charles A. Beard said, "perpetual war for perpetual peace," we should at least be consistent with why we must do so. The logic presented by the Bush administration for removing Saddam is that he is a maniacal dictator, a flagrant human-rights abuser, and an irrational warmonger. When asked, however, if he would consider exile for Saddam as a solution to the problem of Iraq, Secretary of State Colin Powell responded that indeed he could see exile as a possible solution. This abortion of justice is something Christopher Hitchens calls The Kissinger Principle: the more guilty you are, the more immunity you get. If the Bush Administration wants to remove Saddam because he "gases his own people," then Colin Powell's warm endorsement of exile undermines the intention of Saddam's removal.

While considering the Bush Administration's mistakes in logic, one must not neglect the principal sophistry, the doctrine of preemptive attack. Bush claims that attacking Saddam-be it unilaterally if it must-is essentially a form of self-defense because Saddam has weapons of mass destruction-a phrase rendered meaningless by incessant repetition in the media- which he will use against the United States. But the whole concept of self-defense rests on an assumption of a tangible primary attack. This primary attack is counter-attacked and the whole exchange is called "self-defense." I anticipate, of course, arguments such as "Well, are you saying we should wait until

he strikes first and risk another 9/11?" My rejoinder is that I am simply making a plea for the sanctity of logic and language with respect to the concept and meaning of self-defense. Preemptive attack would be better named if it were called simply "attack."

Perhaps the most convincing of all of the reasons not to fight this war can be gleaned from a study of history. When we concern ourselves with the most immediate solutions to the most urgent problems and neglect the consequences, we submit to our most fatal tendency, thinking that the present is all that matters. The ridiculous doctrine of preemption could be adopted by countries such as India and Pakistan. Such an adoption would most likely involve the detonation of nuclear weapons and the slaughter of innocent thousands.

If the United States goes to war with Iraq for the reasons George W. Bush has presented, sophistry will have won. That I am even talking about Saddam Hussein instead of Osama bin Laden suggests that Bush has been very successful in manipulating the major political issues of the day. By boldly declaring that bin Laden's terrorist organization is somehow linked to Saddam's rogue state and, through his mastery of deception, convincing the American people of this nexus, Bush has calmly shifted the emphasis from one Bogey Man to the next. The American public seems to have forgotten that Bush promised Osama bin Laden "dead or alive."

That blood will be spilled in this war seems secondary and irrelevant to the necessity of combating terrorism. As war approaches, there is little talk of the horrors of war and even less consideration for the sentiments of the common soldier. We now, partly because of our being mired to the sight of blood and to the prevalence of tragedy, think of our soldiers as pawns on a chessboard. As we talk of war with Iraq, few of us fathom that we are actually talking about war with Iraq. There is no visceral reaction to war anymore because we have been manipulated. If we support war with Iraq, it is because we are scared they will attack us, not because we believe that the Iraqi people deserve liberation and democracy. We will fight, to be sure, but for all of the wrong reasons.

Defending Dissent

By Matthew Brinton

While reading the papers and online journals every day, I have noticed a trend in politics. People with influence in the modern world, some of whom are celebrities, and ordinary people who have little clout have joined together to protest the upcoming war with Iraq. If you watch television at all, you will have seen various ads for and against the war. Martin Sheen, a member of the Win Without War coalition, is on with the message that the inspections work and that the war won't. Other notables have also put their opinions on the record. A Manhattanville basketball player, Toni Smith, became the object of national media coverage when she refused to acknowledge the American flag at a ceremony. Meanwhile, Sean Penn has outdone them all and actually visited Iraq. French President Chirac and German Chancellor Schroeder and their minions are constantly on CNN and in the print journals with their own messages. Millions have joined the massive worldwide protests that have erupted at the specter of another overt act of aggression by the U.S.

In response, our citizens who have come forward have been vilified as anti-American godless radicals by conservatives, who seem to be mentally stuck in the 1950's, when "disloyal" people might be restrained from expressing their seditious opinions. As for the French, a sort of anti-French hysteria has begun sweeping the country, with French jokes becoming the norm, sneering comments at the French made on the various news shows, and boycotts of French products have even been threatened. It seems that the rest of the world has been trivialized: the country's favorite cowboy has stated "Either you're with us or you're irrelevant."

I disagree. First of all, the French are hardly irrelevant. Despite popular belief, they don't have a weak military that always loses wars, nor are they "surrender monkeys." The fact that they were badly knocked around in the two world wars doesn't reflect on their current military prowess any more than the Vietnam debacle reflects ours. Remember Napoleon? What angers people today about the French, I feel, is the fact that they won't blindly join the posse to string up Saddam Hussein. Imagine that! There actually is a country that we can't bully and push around! Isn't that a shock? Sharp learning curve ahead: the French have the right strategy. They're

not blindly rushing into war. In fact, they should be admired for their restraint and their refusal to be bullied.

Back to America. The various protestors who are expressing their opposition to the war aren't breaking any laws or being subversive by disagreeing with this country's government, and they certainly aren't being anti-American. They are simply exercising their First Amendment rights to free speech and free expression. There's nothing seditious about that. And as for that case about the flag I mentioned earlier, that basketball player is under no obligation to support any flag, American or otherwise. She could burn the American flag if she felt so obligated- there's no law against that. Sheen, Penn, and the rest are under no obligation to keep their opinions to themselves, either. Nor, for that matter, are the various supporters of the war, like Fred Thompson. If various military people can say, on public television, that the protests against the war are "disgraceful", those opposed to the war can certainly say that war itself is disgraceful. There is no constitutional obligation to support the government. Blind faith in the government's leadership is foolish. Big Brother isn't always right.

As for the "godless Anti-American radicals", I'd like to point out three things. First, there's absolutely nothing wrong with atheism (there is such a thing as freedom of religion in this country) and, in any case, most of those opposing the war aren't "godless." Second, anyone who doesn't support the country's foreign policy doesn't necessarily hate the country as a whole. Finally, most of the anti-war protestors are anything but radicals. They are, like I said, just ordinary people who disagree with the government's foreign policy, and they come from all sides of the political spectrum- some of those most vocal against the war are right-wing Christians, as well as moderates and left-wingers.

The whole point of democracy is that everybody can have their say on any topic unmolested. That's not a privilege granted- it's a right, guaranteed in the Bill of Rights itself. Today, those who speak out, whatever their methods, are not, as some have suggested, undermining this country. Rather, they are participating in a long tradition of protest which began in Boston around 1770. The Founders would be pleased.

The Crime of Anti-Americanism

By Andrew Keyser

I find the problems that plague America today absolutely nauseating, as you may know by reading some of my articles. However, one of the worst is the problem of anti-Americanism. Within our country, this idea is spreading with the

speed and effects of a virus, and something has to change.

Anti-Americanism takes many forms, such as flag burning, defiance of the government, insulting the flag, and attacks on the ideals that have made this country

great. Most recently, there has been an eruption of such problems due to the impending war on Iraq and the familiar liberal cry of "free speech" to defend traitorous actions.

Right now there is a Supreme Court case dealing with the right of a woman to turn her back to the American flag. I say that she should have the right to not pledge

allegiance to this flag if she doesn't want to, but insulting the symbol of this nation is a needless insult.

Tracking Tuition: Where Our Money Goes

By Hunter Branstetter

It is common knowledge here on the hill that our tuition is about \$13,000 per year. Additionally, the majority of our student body realizes that tuition money does not pay for all of the amenities we are provided here at MBA. Beyond these few facts, most of us students are woefully unaware of how this institution operates financially. Our lack of knowledge, however, does not prevent us from making fascinating statements about the way our tuition is used and engaging in heated debates over said topic. Around campus I have heard that MBA's tuition pays for: "all the new buildings," "only football expenses," "strictly teachers' salaries," and "the volumes of paper used by the debate team." My personal favorite is the rumor that "each tuition goes into its own sequentially numbered Swiss bank account, then Mr. Gioia and each school trustee gets a cut."

While these theories are all unique, I had my own. I delighted in the notion that every student's tuition was assigned a specific purpose. For example, one tuition might have paid for a piece of audio visual equipment, while another purchased the nametags placed on our chairs in Paschall Theatre before each assembly. Perhaps one tuition bought ink for the schools' multitudinous printers, while another supplied the ever important toilet paper in

our restrooms. Though I often hold ignorance to be bliss, I felt compelled to substantiate or disprove my theory about tuition's use by meeting with MBA's Director of Finance and Operations, Mr. Jackson. Thanks to him, I am now armed with facts to enlighten us all.

MBA's income, as was Gaul, is divided into three major parts. The first part is endowment earnings, which make up about 18% of our school's revenue. The second source is annual giving; these donations provide 12% of MBA's funds each year. The third and largest source, making up 69% of MBA's income, is, as you have probably guessed, tuition. Since this year's operating budget is approximately \$12,000,000, I used my superlative Algebra II math skills to deduce that \$8,280,000 was contributed by tuition.

So, where does our hard earned tuition money go? None of it is used for expansion, such as new buildings or athletic fields; rather, it is used solely for maintaining and operating our school. Approximately 70% (\$8,400,000) of MBA's expenditures this year will go toward salaries, benefits, and instruction. Other than putting in a good word for our favorite teachers with the powers that be, I cannot envision us students having much impact on this portion of the budget. On the other hand,

maintenance of the buildings and grounds accounts for another 16% (\$1,440,000) of MBA's operating budget and is an area in which I believe we can make a difference. While I believe that accidents can and will happen, particularly at a school filled with testosterone-riddled teenage males, I also believe that most of us could be a bit more careful. For example, it is a shame that the thermostat outside Paschall Theatre must be replaced so often. Acknowledging that our entrance for assemblies resembles a stampede, there is no reason for us to maul a wall-mounted device as everyone moves to their respective seats. Granted, that thermostat is only a "small thing," but our lack of respect for school property is also visible in some much larger things such as the drums in the music rooms. While most students in Jazz Band have their own instruments, drums are not easy items to tote around, so MBA supplies them for its drummers. As MBA almost always provides its students with "the best," those drums are instruments of professional quality, with list prices that surpass \$2,000. Unfortunately, the drums have not been cared for properly; thus, they neither look nor sound like several thousand dollars worth of equipment.

Is it possible that we have become so accustomed to MBA's incredible facilities and amenities that we occasionally take them for granted and abuse what is available to us? Shirking our personal accountability in maintaining MBA's property is essentially throwing our much discussed tuition money down the drain. Though MBA's tuition is greater than almost any other school in the city, the facilities and opportunities here are undoubtedly superior to most other schools as well. If we each hold ourselves accountable for keeping MBA's maintenance expenses down, we show appreciation for the privilege of being here.

Let me make it clear that I am only encouraging responsible student behavior, not promoting creative money saving measures. For instance, the next time you are spotted walking across the grass, prompting Mr. Pruitt to yell, "Stay on the red stuff, not the green stuff, you goof," do not announce that you are trying to control the growth of the grass, thereby saving MBA lawn care costs. Furthermore, if you are caught climbing a tree in the Quad, your explanation that you were attempting to alleviate landscaping costs by pruning a few limbs will not be accepted. If you have innovative ideas such as these, please share

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Totomoi (Cont'd)

Grade. He is also a member of the Cum Laude Society and the Ultimate Frisbee team. He was inducted into the Thespian Society for his consistent participation in MBA and Harpeth Hall plays. He volunteered for Bob Clement's campaign this summer. He is an Eagle Scout and an active participant in the Service Club. What about Andrew Quinn? He is a member of the Cum Laude Society and a four-year lacrosse player. He is also the student body president, and has been on the Student Council for four years. As student body president he has helped set-up the Carnival, Bonfire, and Car-Bash. He is part of the Disciplinary Committee and a writer for the *Bell Ringer*. He is also Vice-President of the Service Club. These are not the only senior applicants. Josh Cherry, Trip Tate, Vamsi Gaddipati, and many others were also very legitimate candidates. But how could anyone know of all their academic achievements, strong leadership qualities, athletic participation, and extracurricular activities if the senior information was not reviewed? Yes, some of the students might know it, but would the faculty? One could not remember all this information on every

applicant. Not possible. So why not review the applications? If they were lost, why not have them redone? We are talking about the highest honor a boy can receive at MBA. I think these seniors at least deserve to have their applications looked at for the last four years of hard work.

Not only is Totomoi the highest honor at MBA, it is also the most vague. Its constitution is full of words like honor and integrity and loyalty. Very powerful and meaningful words, but abstract at the same time. It leaves a lot of questions as to just who qualifies for this distinction. When Francis Carter was Headmaster of MBA, he had a points system put in to the Totomoi selection process, so that some objectivity could be present in the system. Nowadays there is only a review of all the applications (although not the case this year), one meeting that lasts about 20 minutes, and a vote (a secret vote where nobody knows who voted for whom). It is all so subjective because each member needs to vote only once (while eligible to vote for four). All sorts of politics and grudges can be brought into this type of system. Why not eliminate

some of this subjectivity by creating a points system? The points system could consist of major and minor categories. Majors could be academics, athletics, and leadership. Minors could be extracurricular activities in school and out of school. An applicant would receive a certain number of points in each, and these could be added up to determine qualification. This type of system would eliminate a certain part of the applicants who would not qualify under the points system. Then there would be a smaller pool of applicants that could go under closer review, and then a vote could take place. By no means do I think the voting process should be eliminated because that would make this honor purely objective, like

the Cum Laude award. I think having a vote by the present Totomoi members makes induction into this society all the more meaningful. Adding a points system would create the best mix of objectivity and subjectivity.

Finally, more than one meeting needs to take place to decide this award. The members should not be worried about how quickly they review and decide on the new members. They should be concerned about making sure all information is circulated to all those voting and that the best choices are made. After all, Totomoi is the "highest honor for a boy at Montgomery Bell Academy," according to the Totomoi Constitution.

2003, The Year of the MBA Snow Day

By Jack Bryant - Managing Editor

MBA has had a long history of not closing school for snow. It had been longer than any current students could remember. This January, however, MBA was out for snow. I think in general everyone enjoyed not having school. I know I did, sledding down Trimble all the way to Estes and spending the majority of my day in bed catching up on much needed, post-exam sleep. There have been many questions surrounding the mythical snow day. So, I thought it would be interesting to find out how MBA decides to take a day off.

As usual all the power is in the hands of Mr. Gioia. He gets up the morning after a snow early (in January's instance 4:00 AM) and drives around the city. If the roads are too slick, does he decide then and there? No, there are many other things that are taken into account. He checks the weather constantly, sees if the sun will warm things up, consults with Mrs. Teaff, the Head of the Harpeth Hall School, takes into account MBA's tradition of not missing school, and finally

makes his decision. He then either chooses to cancel the whole day, start two hours late, which works well for the MBA class scheduling, or chooses to go on as usual. We were out of school in particular this January for several reasons: (1) there had been two snows within one week, (2) very cold temperatures had persisted, (3) recent tragic events at Yale University had been looming heavy in the background, (4) the greatest senior class ever had done so well the first semester that we deserved a reward, and (5) when driving around, Mr. Gioia's car slipped on the ice... "safety first"... so he canceled.

Snow days, however, carry with them a high price. MBA does not build in any extra days for snow. So, when we miss a day, more than likely we will have to make it up. Now, because we had not missed a day in a long time, we are fortunate and will probably not have to make the snow day up this year, however, if we were to miss another day or even a third, then on either a Saturday or another day in June would be added to the schedule.

Crime (Cont'd)

People who oppose wars have an awful tendency to publicly protest the conflict. Again, peaceful protests are acceptable, and even a good thing when trying to prevent needless conflict. But I find it absolutely shameful that once the war has started and troops are dying for

either the freedoms of this country or another, there are Americans who trivialize their sacrifice and insult them as they follow their orders. These protesters should remember before they are so insensitive that a soldier died so that they will not be run over by a tank. If you don't like this country, get out. Don't turn your back on the flag. Anti-Americanism has gone too far.

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Letters to the editor are encouraged, and can be given to a member of the editorial staff, or sent to bellringer@mc.montgomerybell.com. These letters must be signed, but names will be withheld on request. Letters will be edited for length if necessary.

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How to Be a Gentleman Contrarian

By Chris Smith (Opinions Editor)

In the past two issues of this publication, articles on the state of the "gentleman" element of MBA's motto "gentleman, scholar, athlete" have been published on the front page. Both of these articles have suggested that the "gentleman" aspect of our school's motto is the most important aspect and needs the most attention. We as students are continuously encouraged to be "gentlemen" in every sense of the word, though few of us actually know what the word even means. A gentleman, most MBA students agree, is someone who holds the door open for someone else or greets a stranger while looking him in the eyes. But beyond these somewhat nugatory examples and others like it, MBA students have a hard time defining this concept they are so often commanded to exemplify.

For purposes of definition, I look to the gentleman expert John Bridges. In his slightly pompous *A Gentleman Entertains*, Bridges sets some rules for gentlemanly behavior, including: "A gentleman never hires a stripper." Such a statement, while forgetting that various strip clubs view themselves as "gentlemen's clubs," does not establish a clear and

working definition of the word "gentleman." Bridges goes on to set some more tedious rules, such as: "A gentleman checks his china shelves and his linen closet before he invites guests into his home. The number of plates and napkins decrees the number of guests he can comfortably entertain." Parsing this selection, I am able to divine a working but perhaps incomplete definition of a gentleman. By virtue of his owning a "linen closet", a gentleman is obviously a rich man. Although Bridges does not go so far as to say that money is a necessary quality of a gentleman, assumptions of affluence saturate his propriety guide.

I struggle, somewhat, to reconcile the pretentiously urbane tones of Bridges with the placement of the word "gentleman" in our school's motto. Having a linen closet is not what being a gentleman means (at least not all being a gentleman means). As Bridges suggests in *How to Be a Gentleman*, a gentleman is honorable, kind, compassionate, even-tempered, resolute, and affable. But a gentleman is also something else: he is an undemocratic anachronism. In a democratic society where all men are created equal (forgive the tautology, but some people forget what a

Democracy is), embracing and idealizing the concept of a gentleman cannot be justified. Gentlemen are, after all, the best citizens. Anytime words like "better" and "best" are employed, an inequality is brought to light. MBA as a school is in the business of producing leaders, but such a production inevitably perpetuates the *de facto* perceptions of class society Hunter Branstetter almost uncovered in his article on "What Students from Other Schools Think of Us." Branstetter suggested that "there is no reason to taint our [MBA students] reputation by appearing elitist or arrogant." What Branstetter failed to realize, however, is that the motto we live by at this school is elitist and, if only implicitly, arrogant.

For just a moment, I will assume that perhaps being one of the best citizens is not a definitional requirement of a gentleman. I will also suspend my disbelief long enough to assume that MBA is not in the business of producing leaders. An MBA gentleman, stripped of these two characteristics, is still a male who attends a highly expensive private school. While it is my belief that private schools are anathema to democracy, now is not the time for that

argument. The fundamental point here is that a gentleman is, and can only ever be, a male. Education—which, by the way, is the responsibility of the government—cannot be justified if it be invidiously discriminatory based on sex (One may ask if I am saying that MBA should allow women to attend and if I am saying that private schools should cease to exist. As I think the Constitution is on my side, I say yes to both questions).

The qualities the school wishes to express and to summarize with the word "gentleman" are implied in other words. The word "citizen," for example, summarizes—or at least should summarize—the individual personification of the Democratic ideal. Some may say the word "citizen" is awkward or even a laughable statement of the obvious. But a least being a citizen does not automatically imply wealth, family name, masculinity, or superiority. If it is a real concern to MBA to be respected in the eyes of a community, we as a school must change what values we wish to live by. If the anachronistic "gentleman" remains a fundamental part of the school's image, the initials M.B.A. will always stand for "Monetarily Blessed Academy."

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Complaints of a Senior

By Matthew Brinton

Although I usually confine my commentaries in this newspaper to the liberal side of the "Point-Counterpoint" feature, in this issue I will attempt to lay out and comment on some of the grievances of this year's senior class, of which, unfortunately, there are many. I would note that not all seniors feel this way, but a large majority are certainly dissatisfied with the treatment they have received. To be fair, the administration has tried to reach out to us, asking our opinions and wishes in a variety of meetings, but oddly enough, very few of these requests have actually been implemented, or, it seems, even considered.

At the beginning of this year, our class had several meetings with some of the higher-ups such as Mr. Gioia and Mr. Tillman in which we were allowed to state what exactly we wanted as seniors. A senior room was on the top of the list, naturally. I don't recall what the exact response was, but we were given a senior room of sorts in the college counseling room. There wasn't

much in the way of creature comforts (a beanbag was as close as we got to a couch), and the computer was reminiscent of those that we had in fifth grade. We did have a television, but it was for college videos only and nearly everyone had already picked out his colleges by that time, and those that hadn't probably weren't going to find one there. The rule was odd in the sense that you could go to the lunchroom with the rest of the school and watch CNN or ESPN but you couldn't watch it in the senior room. The room was also inhabited by a college counselor official, but luckily for us it was Coach Klausner, probably one of the best neighbors available. One of the promises extracted by class president Kwas stated that we might take down the glass panels and put up our own form of decoration. The panels are still there, now staring down on the junior class. The computer in that room also proved a cause of disharmony. There were games played on it—apparently it's an unpardonable sin to play a computer game

when you have nothing better to do. Repeated attempts at stopping this harmless enjoyment accomplished nothing, so the administration seemed to have given up enforcing that little part of the rules until recently.

The big day came about three weeks ago when it was announced that we would finally be given our own room, the basement of Ball. We thought that we would finally be getting the privileges we were promised—more independence, some comfortable furniture, etc.

Not quite.

The new senior room, which took six months to get, seems to be no better than the original one. In fact, I would say that it's worse. The same furniture-old chairs and a few tables—is in it. There is still a teacher overseeing the room, but this time it's not Coach Klausner. To make matters worse, the Big Red Store is situated on the other side of the room, insuring that at any time between fourth, fifth, and sixth periods

there are some non-seniors there, as well as the mothers who run it. Also, the curious occurrence of a random teacher looking in happens on a regular basis, giving a feeling of being under surveillance. The whole room looks as barren as a prison cell with no windows and nothing on the walls. Couches, sofas, comfortable furniture? Don't ask.

Recently I have heard that we may actually have some furniture after all—possibly after spring break, which happens to be four weeks away. If we do get the furniture then, it will have been approximately six months after we first discussed getting it. By then, there will be six weeks left to enjoy it before the AP exams. And there's still no word on the computers. While I do appreciate the attempts to reach out to the senior class, I'm sure many of my classmates would agree with me when I say that the donuts and pizza are nice, but we'd rather have a decent senior room and the computers back.

New Technology to Solve Old Problems

By Andrew Keyser

During the recent State of the Union Address, it came as somewhat of a surprise that President Bush decided to promise funding for the development of low-emission transportation technologies. While our chief executive is not seen as the tree-hugger type, he is concerned about the environment and takes the same stance that many other conservatives do. This entails saving the environment by developing new technologies instead of choking industry with new restrictions.

The issue of low-emission vehicles, specifically hydrogen fuel-cell cars, is far from a new idea. This technology has been in the works for well over a decade, and some scientists are predicting that we are only another decade or two away from feasible hydrogen transportation. And as early as this past November, a hydrogen-powered bus route went into service in Thousand Palms, California (Boston Globe 11/5/2002). Obviously hydrogen is an alternative source of fuel.

The way that a fuel cell works is by taking a fill-up of hydrogen and producing energy by combining it with oxygen to make water, the only byproduct. Energy is released during this reaction that is used to power an electrical engine that runs the car just like any other electrical engine. There are, however, plenty of flaws in this design.

The first problem is that hydrogen as a fuel would be more expensive than gasoline. It also results in a very inefficient car, which means that a full tank would not get you as far. Finally, electric motors are often difficult to maintain and do not perform as well as a regular internal combustion engine.

Therefore, while hydrogen does provide a clean alternative to gas, it still has a long way to go before it hits the road throughout America. It may also be interesting to see what other new technologies develop between now and then.

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STAR'S PICK

Many Losses, But Track Team Still Confident

Lacrosse Makes a Run For State Title

By Jack Bryant (Managing Editor)

By Josh Sumislawski

As spring rapidly approaches, MBA's track team is practicing for another season of daredevil jumps, strong throws, and swift races. Beginning earlier this month, everyone except the freshmen, of course, has been outside, rain or shine, training for the most important event, the state meet on May 23rd.

Since last year's season, however, the team has suffered the loss of sixteen seniors who made the team state champions in 2001 and then state runners-up in 2002. The 4 x 400 team and the 4 x 800 team, both of which placed first at the state meet, each lost one runner, but the 4 x 100 team, which also brought home the gold medal and set a record of 43.09 seconds last year, took the biggest beating, losing Alex Haemmerlein, Gray Skinner, Akeem Turner, and Cook Wyly. For the distance runners, the team said good-bye to Nick Reid and, of course, the one-and-only Morgan Miller.

Despite the tremendous losses, you can expect a good show from Jeff Snyder, Wilson Robinson, and Chambliss Shillinglaw in the shorter races. Running

the mile or the two-mile, Nathan Mulherin, Robert Stewart, Clayton Trammell, David Scoville, and Brock Baker are also expected to run very well as usual, according to Coach Pruitt.

As for field events, the team has now been practicing without several key athletes. After winning the shot put for the second consecutive year, Will Denbo left, so there probably will not be any sixty-foot throws in that particular event this year. Leaving with him were two other throwers, Tyler Ammarell and Walker Duncan.

In the upcoming season, however, sophomore Matt Bubis, who threw well (forty-four feet and half an inch at the region meet last year) as a freshman, is stronger and has high expectations in the shot put. In pole-vaulting, you can look forward to Jeff Snyder, Cannon Kinnard, and, if his hand is removed from a cast, Chambliss Shillinglaw.

The season kicks into gear on Tuesday, March 11th with a meet against Lipscomb and Hillsboro. Come and support the Big Red.

With a new coach and plenty of returning starters, the MBA lacrosse team is the leading contender for a state championship. In recent years MBA lacrosse has come close to winning championships, including a state championship appearance in 2001 (overtime loss) and 2002.

Despite last year's loss in the state championship, morale is high. Coach Dan Cooper has brought an intense and excited atmosphere to the playing field that gives the team needed motivation, especially through the terrible weather that has plagued the beginning practices. Coach Cooper began coaching five years ago as the eighth grade coach, and this year takes over as head varsity lacrosse coach. This year's senior class was the first team Cooper coached five years ago and because of that the relationship between Cooper and the seniors is strong.

Part of the reason the MBA lacrosse team will be so successful is our senior captains. There is Andrew 'Gay Larry Bird' Quinn who leads the team by the power of Larry Bird and who was an all state midfielder last year. We have David Fleming, more lovingly referred to as K-man (wait, is

that Quinn?), the returning most valuable player. There is attackman David Boyd who is the catalyst for the offense, and defender Bennett Graham, who leads the team with his wild man, take no prisoners, party hard attitude. His acceptance to Princeton inspires us all. Other seniors worth noting are Cyrus Adams, the team's leading scorer, LB Sam Claycombe, who has yet to really practice because of lung problems and a sore knee, Sam Garner, who is a strong defender and a good leader, Jack Lewis, who will be effective at close and long stick middy, and Peter Power, who will provide relief at attack. Lobotomy will most likely contribute if he can stop riding his horse. Downey Bear, Wade Williams, will also contribute if he can contain his urges to pree and man-sandwich.

There is an enthusiasm and determination present this year that the MBA lacrosse team has never had before. We have a shorter schedule without many long road trips that have in the past years tired and deflated the team's spirits. With our new coach and strong senior leadership with help from junior and sophomores, the team looks like it is on the right track to victory. Come to the home games.

Baseball Team Hopes to Win on Its Pitching

By Curtis Lane

Coming off a season in which the baseball team exceeded expectations and placed third in the state, MBA's baseball team has confidence heading into this season. Despite losing Warner Jones, Andrew Wilson, Drake Jarman, Jarrett Anderson, Jack Turner, and James Pace, the team should once again challenge for the region and state title.

This year's team is looking to improve on last year's finish and win the state. In order to achieve this goal, according to Coach Wims, they must "play as a complete team, with everybody understanding their role". This year's team will have a lot of versatility, with many guys that can play multiple positions. The team gained valuable experience last year in the state tournament, and that will work to their advantage. One of the biggest strengths of the team should be the defense, especially in the infield. "We will be very good defensively and on the base paths," says Coach Golenor. Returning players who should play key roles include Scott Pettus, Brad French, Tom Santi, Wesley Langlois, Matthew Jacques, Michael McDaniel, John

Murdock, Trip Tate, Anthony Bills, Michael Fisher, Hunter Hawkins, Wylie Jones, and Brent Sayles. Although nothing is solidified yet, the coaches are confident that they can put together all the different pieces into a good team.

The biggest key, perhaps, for success this year will be the consistency of the starting pitching. They must get solid innings from their starters, who will include Brad French, Scott Pettus, Wylie Jones, Hunter Hawkins, Michael Fisher, and Anthony Bills. "We can only go as far as our pitching," says Coach Golenor. Many players who saw limited action last year will have to step up in the pitching game in order for them to be successful. Aside from pitching, another concern for the team is its power hitting. The lack of power, however, could be a blessing, forcing the team to rely more on producing runs rather than just waiting for a 3-run home run.

"In our region, every single game is a dogfight," says Coach Golenor. With Father Ryan, BA, and BGA, the region will be very competitive. BA, coming off a very good season, only lost one senior to

graduation. Father Ryan still has the same core team that won the state last year, and BGA, coming off a down year, should be back in contention. "There are four teams in our region that can win on any given day," says Coach Wims. The region is completely up for grabs, making every single game an important one for MBA. "We want to continually improve and finish strong," says Coach Wims; "and, as always, the #1 goal is to win the state."

This team, full of exciting players, should be fun to watch. Every game will be important and, therefore, competitive. The goal of winning the state is one that is very realistic for this team, which should be very successful.

Look: Soccer

By Josh Cherry

Nothing like a good preview article, especially about a sport that most of the student body knows little about. Not that I'm saying that there's a general disregard for the MBA soccer team; rather, it's just that most of the student body in the past has had better things to do than watch our soccer games, such as not going. However,

for all students that do attend soccer games this year, there will be free pizza after every home game.*

The team, itself, is shaping up to be a powerhouse and continue with the progress made after last season. After finishing 2nd in the state last year, this year's squad is in a good position to continue this tradition (of one year) of excellence by winning the state tournament.

After the loss of seven seniors including Brian Charnock and Drew Oldham, the team at first would appear to be at a loss. However, with returning talent Michael Koban, Matt Serck, David Harper, recently signed Division I goalkeeper Justin Holland, and national super-club team members Jeff Glaser and Jonathan Gotterer, we have the potential to be a dominant force.

Our first four scrimmages having been cancelled due to rain, the soccer team will jump right into our fifteen-game regular season beginning on Wednesday, March 12 against McGavock. Upcoming scrimmages are this Tuesday and Saturday against David Lipscomb and Franklin High School, respectively. Any support will be appreciated throughout the entire season.

*There probably won't be pizza after home games.

Is Big Brother Watching Us?

By Jeffrey Zager

Anyone who has ever spent a day at MBA knows that strange, indescribable feeling that hovers over the campus. No, it's not the honor that comes with being a member of one of the top schools in the country. It's the feeling that someone is looking over your shoulder every minute of the day. Now most of the time someone really is looking over your shoulder, but sometimes you can't always see him...

Determined to unveil any secret cameras or microphones, I started to look around the campus for "shady activity." The library was home to several suspicious objects. First of all, there is an unmarked room under the stairs next to the water fountains. Every day during second period, Mr. Carter (our company's computer guy) goes into the room and does "computer stuff" and leaves. Now he says that the room contains "servers", but I did some research

and it turns out that the server enables things like the internet and e-mail to work faster. Given the recent speed of our computers, I doubt that the room contains servers. Instead, it probably contains all of the video feed which goes directly to the executives at CBS who are planning a high school reality show. Other items on the list of things which I can't explain include the little white circle things all over the ceiling (probably microphones) and the little box in the study rooms (also probably microphones). Finally, I found out that Mr. Tate has been known to talk candidly about hidden cameras to the librarians. Now ask yourself, would Mr. Tate lie?

Baffled by all of this "shady activity," I decided that I would ask Mr. Gioia; he seems like a nice guy. For those of you who have never met with Mr. Gioia, you are probably not aware that his door is not

exactly always open. Being a very busy man, it is necessary to set up an appointment with him, which I did. Choosing the politician's way out, he denied any and all existence of a surveillance system, saying "We have toyed with the idea, but we never really thought it was necessary." Sounds like a reasonable point. But then he slipped (not literally). He added that "it's just so expensive." Hold on. When was the last time that money was a factor in deciding what is best for the campus? Having what I felt was sufficient evidence to write a somewhat funny article, I ended the meeting.

So now, as my public service announcement comes to an end, I encourage all of you to think twice before planning an elaborate scheme to steal millions of dollars from the school, because there's always someone watching.

A Modest Proposal: We Need Strip Clubs at MBA

By Jack Davis

Having recently read Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" of 1729, I was inspired to create one of my own for our glorious academy. At MBA, there is a glaring lack of the female gender, one that actually constitutes a majority of the world's population. I'm about as likely to see a girl here as I am to discover that Sadaam Hussein is my half-brother. Almost everywhere you look, you see sausage, sausage, and yep, you guessed it, more sausage. Like most MBA students, I do not enjoy attending such sausage feasts on an everyday basis. Nevertheless, up to this point, no one has been able to come up with a satisfactory solution to this dilemma. Enter Jack Davis.

To cure this problem, I propose that strip clubs be established on each wing of our ample campus. One could be constructed behind the Wallace Building, another for the junior schoolers next to Massey, a third in the Quad, and a fourth next to the senior parking lot. The establishment of a strip club in each of these areas would allow students, no matter where they are on campus, to pop in for a few minutes any day of the week. No longer would students be so starved for a female presence. My proposal will please the MBA administration for two main reasons: 1. it will result in another source of revenue for MBA, money that will be vital considering the recent decline in donations, and 2. it will promote better study habits, as the majority of students will strive to be on PL so that they can purchase lapdances and whatnot* during their study halls. When my proposal is realized, MBA will reach new heights, not only locally but also nationally and God forbid globally, as the best students from all over will make our beloved Montgomery Bell Academy their first choice.

*supervisors will be hired to enforce the no-touching policy—each touch will result in a penalty of five demerits (sorry guys)

Footnote: What you have just read was one of Jack Davis's English assignments. His teacher was so pleased with his "modest proposal" that he encouraged him to submit it to *The Bell Ringer* so that the entire school could enjoy his wonderful idea.

Cryptic Account of a College Visiting-Weekend in February

By Max Douglas

As I sit in the stomach of a flying bird, tripping on sweet tingly bubbles of carbonation, I begin to reflect on a weekend spent in February. These days progressed not without sacrifice, as sportsmen of frozen water made certain I acknowledged their unneeded loss. World War Three was narrowly avoided. Beginning with such turmoil, this adventure seemed destined for failure.

Chicken nuggets, coated with sloppy red sauce, apparently originating from the double yellow arches, yet served at a third rate Chinese restaurant, now rest in my belly, creating occasional gaseous excretions. This typically pleasant occasion, however, is unfortunate because I find myself surrounded by several southern delights who accompany me on my journey home. Enjoying similar quality of accompaniment, the nuggets find themselves indulging in white and purple bacteria, previously enjoyed by my taste

senses as it quickly passed through during the middle digesting hour of that same day. This creamy delicacy was made and presented by the institution of CC, which was one of two necessary destinations throughout my quest.

The other requirement, and first campus, I attended was in the territory titled Boulder, housing twenty thousand Buffalos and forty thousand miscellaneous creatures enjoying an array of activities. Some slid on wood slabs, down frozen slopes while others turned chains and changed gears, propelling themselves to picnics or lectures. I was a mere observer, trying to decide if I wished to undertake this metamorphosis and become one of the herd. Having purchased two triangle representations, one to decorate the walls of objective knowledge, and the other to remain in my possession, I parted from Boulder so that my journey could continue.

Being between the houses of intellects, I then found myself with many ticks until my next appointment. My appetite for excitement was petitioning for appeasement. I chose to stretch my feet and arms to greatly aid the process of slipping uncontrollably. Exceeding the maximum speed of which humans were designed to travel is always appealing. After several attempts of ending my life, soon to be followed by leisure spent in a sofa traveling against gravity, I decided I had had enough fun for one day.

Having left this resort of Madness, I began the final stretch of this once-thought impossible journey. I arrived at the second requirement on the day - celebrating our past and present leaders, which has no significance but is worth note. After a quick introduction and briefing by the admission, I found myself in their very pleasant ingesting hall, gulping that 'white and purple creamy delicacy' with great pleasure.

Quelle Scandale! (Yet another reaction to Jeffrey Zager's article, about teachers who dislike the French, from four issues ago)

Submitted Anonymously (by Mr. Pruitt)

During the recent holidays, Cdr. Carr was seen conversing with a small woman who proved to be *FRENCH*. Additional video replays revealed that he was saying words that may have been French. Words like "tootesweet", parleyvoo, or jimmyPELLPierre" seemed to have come out of his mouth.

Perhaps Mr. Carr's protestations in regards to the French have been an obfuscation all along, n'est-ce pas? After all, did he not show up here a few years back after having spent an inordinate amount

of time *en Europe*? And does he not profess to love the science *la chimie*, the science indeed, of Lavoisier, Pasteur, Beignet, and Curie? He seems to have a penchant for experiments flambés. For an old salt, he also knows quite a bit about Napoleonic artillery and cavalry tactics. Perhaps this exposé will be his Waterloo.

A few camouflaged inquiries utilizing methods of special national security have revealed that during his years in the service, Mr. Carr had an extensive collection of Jerry Lewis videos (beta format), and several swinging vinyls by Johnny

Halliday. He has claimed that his favorite *American* movie is "The French Connection". Is the US Navy past really a subterfuge for having spent the last twenty years in the French Foreign Legion?

Allons enfants de la Patrie, if you take away the silver fox coiffure, he bears an amazing resemblance to Nicholas Flammel. Some might be convinced that his whole raison d'être at MBA is to surreptitiously forward French Language and Culture. His daily harangues seem de rigueur.

Marcel Marceau had no comment.

Thumbs Up For *The Recruit*

By Chris Gioia

Directed by Roger Donaldson, *The Recruit* is an action suspense movie about a man named James Clayton, played by Colin Farrell, who is recruited by the CIA to be an agent. Roger Donaldson also directed the movie *Thirteen Days* about the Cuban missile crisis, giving him some insight into how to make a movie about the government. Colin Farrell was in the recent movie *Minority Report* and also stars in *Daredevil* which is in theaters now. Al Pacino plays Walter Burke, a tough CIA recruiter who tracks down young people with potential to become CIA agents. Al Pacino, as we all know, has been in many great movies, especially *The Godfather*. The tough character he played in *The Godfather* probably helped him to play the CIA agent with a hard attitude in *The Recruit*. A very smart, athletic young man recently out of college, James Clayton has many talents, especially his interest in computers. His recent computer program "Spartacus" is an important development and because of his immense knowledge and skill, Burke begins to recruit him as a CIA agent. Burke is a hard man without much compassion and is the stereotype of a typical CIA agent: smart, tough, serious, and mysterious. When asked if Walter Burke is his real name during a lie detector test to train the recruits, he

replies no. The lie detector says he is telling the truth, so this creates an element of mystery around Burke and helps to build his character as a true CIA agent.

Clayton is taken to a CIA training facility known as "The Farm" where he is

is a test. Because of this rule Clayton tries extremely hard to succeed and daily becomes more like a spy, aware of his surroundings and suspicious. Layla Moore, played by Bridget Moynahan who was recently in *The Sum of All Fears*, is another

interested in succeeding for the CIA and not boys. Such a relationship is very common in action movies like this, where a guy tries to get a girl who is not interested in him. Although it is not a new idea, it still provides good entertainment and is interesting to see.

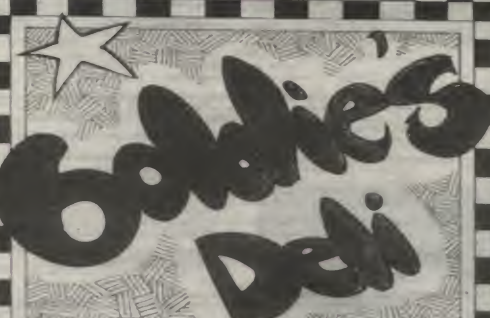
Clayton is told about a mole who has infiltrated the CIA, and he must eliminate the mole. The rest of the movie follows his dealing with this mole and certain "tests" he must pass. Overall, *The Recruit* is a good movie, earning the *Bell Ringer* rating of 3 out of 5 stars. The movie is very suspenseful, but some ideas lack ingenuity and are taken from similar movies. The acting was great, especially by Al Pacino as the very believable CIA recruiter/trainer Walter Burke. Although at some times there is a lack of action in *The Recruit*, the film generally keeps the viewer alert and tense. The film also shows moviegoers the reality of the life of CIA agents and how hard it is to be one, trusting not even those who are closest to you. The movie provides a suspenseful and surprising ending that will shock the audience and make it worth the trip to the theater. I recommend this movie to anyone who is in the mood for a good spy thriller.



Pacino and Farrell in *The Recruit*

trained to be a future CIA agent. Watching Clayton at the farm, the audience sees his strengths and watches him grow and improve daily in all aspects of his training. While at the farm, Clayton learns one very important rule of the CIA and life: everything

agent-in-training at the farm with Clayton, and he begins to fall for her. Watching their relationship is very interesting because both are very ambitious people, but Clayton's ambition is to succeed in the CIA and win over Layla, whereas Layla only seems



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Last year, nearly 1,100 students from all over Nashville participated in PULSE Day, working on projects from painting buildings and planting trees to helping at food banks and creating nature trails. The day's opening ceremony features a free breakfast and music. Teams are then transported to various project sites around the city. After several hours of work, volunteers return to Centennial Park for a "thank you" celebration, which includes performances by local bands, a free lunch and the world's largest MoonPie for dessert. T-shirts will even be available to all volunteers for five dollars.

PULSE (People United Leading and Serving Everywhere) is a year-round program put on by Hands on Nashville and the Oasis Center, with funding from the Frist Foundation, to sponsor volunteer and leadership opportunities for teenagers in Nashville.

With hundreds of teen members and a host of nonprofit agencies that rely on our help, PULSE is striving to make the new year better than ever before. To get more information on PULSE Day, please call 327-4455 or visit our website at www.nashvillepulse.org.

Gone, But Still the Chrisanthrope

By Christopher Schuller

DORTMUND, GERMANY—This month the *Bell Ringer's* fearless war/film correspondent comes to you on leave from Eton College and vacationing in the heart of Germany's industrial center, Westphalia. Wait, wait! Don't turn the page—that doesn't mean you're going to have to sit through a review of *Das Boot*. Stay tuned. I have seen normal movies this month.

Gangs of New York

Bell Ringer Rating: 3.5/5 (Euros)



Although this movie is ostensibly based on Herbert Asbury's novel of the same name, it might as well have had its origins in Upton Sinclair's infamous work about the meat-packing process, *The Jungle*. God knows there was enough human hamburger flying athwart the screen as I watched this bloody film unfold in 35mm kill-o-vision. Daniel Day-Lewis slaughters Irishmen, humans, (oops, did I just separate those two categories?) pigs, cows, small children, and the appetites of every last ticketholder seated before him with reckless abandon, making for a film which combines intricate lessons in oft-neglected bits of American history with the pressing need for a barf bag. Leonardo di Caprio also acts in this film, though only as a bare chest for Cameron Diaz to rub her hands against a couple of times under requisite sordid candlelight. I also could have done without the scene in which poor Leo gets branded with a red-hot iron, but only because I was forced to face the prospect of finishing the popcorn



in my lap afterwards, not because I felt any sympathy for some thrice-recycled brainless hunk of titillation. Now that I think about it,

one of the sickening delights in *Gangs* (and there are oh so many) is seeing the obnoxious blonde kid from *Growing Pains* get his face fried. In other words, highly recommended. Martin Scorsese (who shares my November 17th birthday) directs, and the blood spatters also land on such supporting actors as Liam Neeson, Jim Broadbent, and Brendan Gleeson.

Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

Bell Ringer Rating: 4/5

A German word comes to mind when attempting to review this movie, but since it won't mean anything to most of you, I'll save it for someone who cares. Wasn't that nice of me? It was also nice of Peter Jackson not to mess the second film up too badly, and the four-euro rating that the *Bell Ringer* war/film correspondent has bestowed above is mostly a sigh of relief because of that very fact. It was with a heavy heart that I entered the cinema to see this film, having heard nasty reports of its betrayal of Tolkien's intentions beforehand. I



discovered quickly, however, that this second part of the trilogy lives up in every aspect to the film which came before it, and



is, therefore, a must-see for *Fellowship* devotees. If you missed the first one, however, take your \$7.75 and buy a lap dance, because it will be less confusing. Elijah Wood continues his performance as the dazed-and-confused Frodo Baggins unwaveringly, and Viggo Mortensen remains vague sexy mysterious tall dark and handsome or whatever for two and a half hours. Brief appearances by Ian McKellen, Sala Baker, John Bach, Cate Blanchett, and the mobile Michael Jackson look-alike contest known in the film as the Orc army. Peter Jackson (no relation, thankya Jesus) directs. Also starring Sean Astin, Dominic Monaghan, Orlando Bloom (the next inductee into the Keanu Reeves Hall of Acting Fame), and John Rhys-Davies.

Daredevil

Bell Ringer Rating: 1/5

About three weeks after I had arrived in Eton, I was walking back from German class one Monday evening when my German beak (aka teacher, translated from the eton-speak) caught up with me and we started talking about the finer points of the German subjunctive, an excruciatingly boring topic for anyone who isn't really interested in non-Romance European languages. But it was pretty cool, nonetheless, seeing as how he is a relatively interesting dude and there's a small contingent of mildly insane people that think I am a relatively interesting dude, so we were able to spring from the subjunctive to a wider range of language topics as we strolled in the direction I was heading. Finally, when we had stopped in front of my house, he asked me, *Are you understanding the German alright?* Oh, the



German is fine, I replied. It's the English that's giving me trouble. What's the point of that story, you ask? Well, take it from me, it was a better use of your time than reading



a paragraph about this lame-o excuse for a movie. With Ben Affleck (who was seen buying a copy of *Acting for Dummies* recently in an LA bookstore... and for a good reason), Jennifer Garner, and Michael Clarke Duncan, whom they should have executed in *The Green Mile* when they had the chance. Stay away.

Confessions of a Dangerous Mind Definitely Worth It

By John Patten

In the past two years, we have seen the emergence of two excellent rookie directors. First was Mark Romanek who brought us *One Hour Photo*. The second was the most unlikely prodigy—George Clooney. Until he recently announced he did not support the war on Iraq (for all of the right reasons), I did not think it could be possible that he had a brain unless he enjoyed having his agent repeatedly sign him for projects that would amount to nothing more than mounds of crappy moments in film history. He did, though, muster up enough intelligence to make an extraordinary exposé on the art of effective black comedy, *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*. The story attempts to be the biographical piece on the pathological liar Chuck Baris, an emotionally unbalanced TV show producer who claimed he was an undercover CIA agent. The film clings to an almost non-existent plot of random moments in Baris' life, whether it be capping a German who is a threat to national security or jeering at some idiot on *The Gong Show*. The film was definitely worth seeing. It helps to draw out more sense and similarities from those random twitches we all get to just beat the living day out of someone next to us. Clooney makes these humorous violent fantasies of Baris', which would usually get you a quick ticket to a shrink's office, a sort of ridiculous treatment to quell the inner anger by laughing at Baris' urges. One of the funniest parts in the movie is when Baris happily day-dreams of firing a round or two of a shotgun into the back of an Asian woman wearing a kimono and Elvis glasses, singing the worst rendition of "If I Had a Hammer". Clooney makes a few immature mistakes here and there by trying to draw in love- and sex-driven sub-plots which really have no bearing on the resolution of the film. The ending, however, was absolutely stunning. I will recommend anyone, no matter how loving and peaceful they are (even the Maharishi), to sit through the movie for the last two lines. I was kind of stunned when it was over that pretty-boy George was really able to pull it off. The ending makes everyone who has a hard time recognizing his flaws sit there staring at the screen and nervously laugh, asking himself the same two questions: How long can I keep my sanity? Will I be that bitter? The truth is worse than fiction.

The Year in Cinema

Jack Davis' Picks

This year I saw at least 55 movies at the theater. Some were particularly captivating, others just plain sucked, and I actually managed to miss a few. With these things in mind, here lies my take on film in 2002 and my predictions for March 23's Academy Awards:

Top 10 Movies of the Year

1. *Road to Perdition*-Tom Hanks + Paul Newman + director Sam Mendes + the late cinematographer Conrad Hall = beautiful gangster epic = 2002's best.



Road to Perdition best movie this year in Davis' mind

2. *Insomnia*-Pacino's best performance since, dare I say it, *The Godfather Part II*, along with the fabulously creepy Robin Williams.
3. *Antwone Fisher*-Newcomer Derek Luke is fabulous in Denzel Washington's powerful directorial debut.
4. *8 Mile*-Eminem, *L.A. Confidential*'s Cutris Hanson, and "Lose Yourself" team for fall's best film.
5. *Minority Report*-Cruise and Spielberg fire on all cylinders.
6. *25th Hour*-Edward Norton and director Spike Lee produce one of the most memorable scenes of the past few years.
7. *Catch Me if You Can*-DiCaprio, Hanks, and Spielberg combine for year's most enjoyable film.
8. *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*-Follow-up to 2001's *The Fellowship of the Ring* is bigger, not necessarily better.
9. *Narc*-Ray Liotta and Jason Patric deliver powerhouse performances in year's best indie film.

10. *Red Dragon*-All-star cast (Hopkins, Norton, Fiennes, Keitel, etc.) blows 2001's *Hannibal* out of the water.

Worst 5 Movies of the Year

1. *Rollerball*-I can't believe I'm admitting to having seen this.
2. *Trapped*-Charlize Theron doesn't even take her clothes off.
3. *The Time Machine*-I'd rather come to school than waste my "time" watching this garbage.
4. *Die Another Day*-Surfing on a piece of metal in the Arctic Ocean and the relentless double entendres make this the most disappointing movie of the year.
5. *XXX*-Vin Diesel actually manages to regress as an actor.
6. *The Scorpion King*-The Rock in a theatrical release, 'nuff said.

Oscar Predictions

Picture: *Chicago*-this juggernaut can't be stopped, even though it wasn't strong enough to keep me awake.

Director: Martin Scorsese for *Gangs of New York*-he doesn't deserve this because this movie was a colossal mess, but he's going to win anyway because he never has before.

Actor: Jack Nicholson for *About Schmidt*-this guy is too cool to lose—people are gonna vote for him just to see what he does at the podium.

Actress: Nicole Kidman for *The Hours*-she'll get the sympathy vote because Cruise moved on to the superior Cruz and she lost last year for *Moulin Rouge*.

Supporting Actor: Chris Cooper for *Adaptation*-the Academy loves the no-namer in this category.

Supporting Actress: Catherine Zeta-Jones for *Chicago*-that she kept me awake for several minutes speaks volumes for her performance.

Ted Tywang's Picks

Top 10 movies of the year:

1. *25th Hour*-Everything works...a flawless film...Spike Lee's best yet
2. *One Hour Photo*-Robin Williams is a genius
3. *Frailty*-Not a Bill Paxton fan ever since *Twister*, but great in this film
4. *Adaptation*-Should win everything at the Oscars
5. *Death to Smoochy*-You probably missed it because it was out for about 6 hours, but incredibly funny, shows Robin Williams versatility
6. *Insomnia*-Robin Williams is still a genius
7. *8 Mile*-Eminem's acting debut a huge success...he really pulled it off
8. *We Were Soldiers*-AKA *Braveheart III*, but still very good, better than *The Patriot*

What should win: *Gangs of New York*-Not my pick for best of the year, but a solid film and best of the nominations

Best Actor:

Who will win: Jack Nicholson, *About Schmidt*-Nicholson is Hollywood's darling and he'll get an Oscar simply for playing himself

Who should win: Nicholas Cage, *Adaptation*-Cage is brilliant in a decidedly non-beefcake role as an insecure, overweight, balding writer.

Actress:

Who will win: Julianne Moore, *Far from Heaven*-Why not

Who should win: Diane Lane, *Unfaithful*-Incredibly sexy in this movie...go see it just for her

Supporting Actor:

Who will win: Chris Cooper, *Adaptation*-Even the picky Academy can't deny what an amazing performance this was



25th Hour, starring Edward Norton, was the best movie of the year for Ted

9. *Catch Me if You Can*-Next to *Gangs of New York*, the biggest reason why Leonardo DiCaprio should stick to funny, light-hearted family films...very good
10. *Gangs of New York*-Solid movie, would be even better if it had a real actor playing the epic hero

Who Should win: Chris Cooper, *Adaptation*-Hilarious and tormented character, made the movie

Supporting Actress:

Who will win: Catherine Zeta Jones, *Chicago*-The Academy says, "she can sing and dance so let's give her an Oscar"

Who should win: Meryl Streep, *Adaptation*-Her performance wasn't amazing, but she was solid and the movie was incredible and I want it to win every award possible.

Oscars:

Best Picture:

What will win: *Chicago*-Hollywood loves musicals and anytime a big star shows he can at all sing or dance (Richard Gere), the movie gets tons of awards

Junior Honor Society Inductees, Current Members and Past Members

Junior Honor Society Candidates - Spring
2003

8th Grade:

Chase Altenbern
Austin Tipper
Adam Baker
Stockton Beveridge
Harrison Brown
Kyle Davis
William Emfinger
Jamie Fletcher
Russell Mack
Patrick Mehta
Mark Piana
Zach Richardson
Nathan Sears
Miller Sherrill
Alex Smith
Jonathan Usry

9th Grade:

Joseph Alexander
In Course: Eric Beiter
Lewis Brown
Clark Connery
Aaron Dye
Kafkas Everest
Read Ezell
Bobby Goodrich
Trey Kendall
Clayton Lainhart
John Lee
Nick Power
Will Proffitt
David Reynolds
William Schuller
Kevin Seitz
David Wheeler
Martin Wieck
Andrew Wiser
Jeffrey Zager

10th Grade:

Will Colton
Will DeLoache
Matthew Doster
Jared Hobbs
Chade Hume
Curtis Lane
Will Smith
Josh Sumislawski
Grant Thomas
In course:
Andy Alsentzer
Brock Baker
William Chapman
Cotton Clark
Paul Crook
Jed Crumbo
Matthew Doster
Jack Eakin
Chris Gioia
Jonathan Gotterer

Richard Greathouse
Alex Lamballe
Daniel Patten
Andrew Pitman
Jonathan Ray
Tripp Rebrovick
Craig Stewart
Brian Syverud
Caldwell Tanner
Hughes Tipton
Reece Tucker
Jake Wright
Jesse Wright

11th Grade:

David Amiot
Tyler Augusty
Davide Devietti-Goggia
In course:
Taylor Barnett
Phillip Bracikowski
Chris Cynn
Jack Davis
Scott Hagan
David Harper
Arthur Kim
Patrick Linehan
Charley McMillan
Charlie Morgan
Matthew Naftilan
Charlie Pate
John Patten
Benjamin Pote
Daniel Rosenblatt
Tom Santi
Christopher Schuller
Clark Shell
Matt Smith
Taylor Tate
Steve Vutsinas
Pat Whitworth
Trevor Yarbrough
Rob Zelle

12th Grade:

Past Members:
Jackson Balthrop
Hamilton Berry
David Boyd
Jim Bryant
Josh Cherry
Brian Christie
Brent Collins
Matt Conrad
Rob DeLaney
John Eason
Brian Elliott
Christopher Emfinger
Mark Fritz
Vamsi Gaddipati
Daniel Gluck
Bennett Graham
Jay Howell
Josh Kupersmidt
Matthew Leftwich
Michael McDaniel

David McNamee
Hunter Mobley
Ben Newman
Peter Power
Andrew Quinn
Paul Reynolds
J.B. Spaulding
Trip Tate
Timothy Vaughn

The purpose of the Junior Honor Society is to recognize those students who have distinguished themselves academically during their early years at MBA.

In order to be eligible, a student must have three consecutive semesters with an average of 90 each semester during the 7th-8th, 8th-9th, and 9th-10th grades. These semester averages must be earned at MBA and cannot be transferred from a previous school's records.

After six semesters have been completed in the high school, students are dropped from the Junior Honor Society.

A student must maintain an 85 average to remain in the Society.

National Merit Finalists

Hamilton Berry
Brian Christie
Rob DeLaney
Chris Emfinger
Vamsi Gaddipati
Bennett Graham
Jay Howell
Andrew Keyser
Josh Kupersmidt
Matthew Leftwich
Michael McDaniel
David McNamee
Ben Newman
Paul Reynolds
Trip Tate

Seniors Accepted Early Decision to College

Jackson Balthrop
David Boyd
Jim Bryant
Brian Christie
Matt Conrad
Aaron Davis
Bennett Graham
Hunter Hawkins
David McNamee
Andrew Quinn
Chris Webb

Rice University
University of Virginia
Vanderbilt University
Dartmouth College
Brown University
Vanderbilt University
Princeton University
University of Rochester
Brown University
University of Virginia
Vanderbilt University